

Representative Rob Wittman (VA-1) has introduced renewable energy legislation aiming to simplify processes for testing and development of offshore wind. Wittman, a proponent of an all-of-the-above energy strategy, submitted the legislation following its successful passage in the U.S. House of Representatives during the 112th Congress.

“I strongly believe that our nation is past due in efficiently developing a smart, forward-thinking energy strategy and our own sources of energy,” Wittman said. “The government must make it easier to move forward on renewable energy projects, instead of putting up bureaucratic red tape which stifles development and buries these projects in paperwork for years. That is why I have introduced this legislation. While it is critical that energy development is safe and environmentally friendly, the process must become more efficient. Offshore wind energy is an important component furthering development of clean, renewable American energy sources. As a scientist by trade, I understand the need to achieve a balance, to foster development of American energy while at the same time protecting the integrity of our environment. We can achieve both efficiency and protection, and this bill helps us accomplish both goals.”

The Advancing Offshore Wind Production Act (H.R. 1398), would streamline the process for the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to approve temporary infrastructure, such as towers or buoys, to test and develop offshore wind power in the Outer Continental Shelf. This process is often unnecessarily slowed for years by bureaucratic hurdles in the permitting process. H.R. 1398 will speed the production of wind energy, as it sets a 30-day timeline for the Secretary of the Interior to act on permits for all weather testing and monitoring projects in the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf. This bill will also streamline the environmental review process needed to place temporary infrastructure as long as the project is removed within five years, causes less than one acre of disruption at the location of each tower or device and causes no more than five acres of seafloor disruption within the proposed area for the project.

H.R. 1398 requires coordination with the Department of Defense and other affected agencies so the projects do not disrupt national security, or other critical projects. This provision is especially important for the Commonwealth of Virginia, with its active defense community.

This legislation passed in the House last year, as part of the [Domestic Energy and Jobs Act, H.R. 4480](#), but did not achieve passage in the Senate.

Wittman Introduces Renewable Energy Legislation

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Congressman Rob Wittman represents the First District of Virginia. He serves on the House Natural Resources Committee and the House Armed Services Committee where he is the Chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee.